

**City Council Regular Session  
May 22, 2023**

The City Council of the City of Elizabeth City met in regular session on Monday, May 22, 2023 in Council Chambers, located on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Municipal Administration Building, 306 E. Colonial Avenue, Elizabeth City, NC.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor E. Kirk Rivers  
Mayor Pro Tem Kem Spence  
Councilman Johnson Biggs  
Councilman Joe Peel  
Councilwoman Rose Whitehurst  
Councilman Javis Gibbs  
Councilwoman Katherine Felton  
Councilwoman Barbara Baxter  
Councilman Johnnie Walton

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

OTHERS PRESENT: City Manager Montre' Freeman  
City Attorney Bill Morgan  
Electric Superintendent Donnell White  
Chief of Police J. Phillip Webster  
Deputy Chief of Police James Avens  
Human Resources Director Montique McClary  
Fire Chief Chris Carver  
ECDI Director Debbie Malenfant  
Finance Director Alicia Steward  
Assistant Finance Director Brian Lewis  
Interim Community Development Director Reggie Goodson  
Public Utilities Director Dwan Bell  
Parks and Recreation Director Sean Clark  
Grants Management Specialist Jon Hawley  
IT Director Matthew Simpson  
IT Systems Analyst Pedro Holley II  
City Clerk April Onley

The City Council regular session was called to order by Mayor Kirk Rivers at 7:00 p.m. Mayor Rivers welcomed everyone to the meeting and recognized Mayor Pro Tem Spence to provide the invocation, after which Councilman Biggs led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**1. Agenda Adjustments and Approval:**

Mayor Rivers requested the Council's pleasure regarding approval of the prepared agenda.

Mayor Rivers asked the Council's pleasure on the presented agenda. Councilman Biggs asked to remove item A from the Consent Agenda and place it on the Regular Agenda for discussion. He also asked to amend the Boys and Girls Club item from simply discussion to a consideration / discussion item, as there may be proposed action. Councilman Peel asked to add a Personnel item onto the pre-existing Closed Session, as allowed by NCGS 143-318-11(a)(6).

**Motion was made by Councilman Joseph Peel, seconded by Councilman Johnson Biggs to approve the agenda as amended. Those voting in favor of the motion were: Biggs, Peel, Gibbs, Whitehurst, Spence, Felton, Baxter and Walton. Against: None. Motion carried.**

**2. Mayoral Recognition:**

**a. National Nurses Month;**

***PROCLAMATION  
NATIONAL NURSES MONTH***

## MAY 2023

**WHEREAS**, registered nurses in the United States constitute our nation's largest health care profession; and

**WHEREAS**, the depth and breadth of the registered nursing profession meets the different and emerging health care needs of the American population in a wide range of settings, including the frontline of the pandemic, and

**WHEREAS**, the American Nurses Association, as the voice for registered nurses in this country, is working to chart a new course for a healthy nation that relies on increasing access to primary and preventive health care, and better utilization of all our nation's registered nursing resources, and

**WHEREAS**, professional nursing is an indispensable component of the safety and quality of care of hospitalized and non-hospitalized patients; and

**WHEREAS**, the demand for registered nursing services will be greater than ever because of the aging of the American population, emerging health challenges, the continuing expansion of life-sustaining technologies, and the explosive growth of home health care services; and

**WHEREAS**, more qualified registered nurses are needed in the future to meet the increasingly complex needs of health care consumers in this community; and

**WHEREAS**, the cost-effective, safe, and high-quality health care services provided by registered nurses will be an increasingly important component of the United States health care delivery system in the future; and

**WHEREAS**, along with the American Nurses Association, the North Carolina Nurses Association has declared May as Nurses Month, with the theme "You Make a Difference," with appreciation for nurses' unparalleled impact during the pandemic, and their contributions to health care, and an open invitation to #ThankANurse for enriching our lives and the world we live in.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the City Council of the City of Elizabeth City asks that all residents of Elizabeth City join in honoring the registered nurses who care for all of us and join in recognizing May 2023 as National Nurses Month.

**PROCLAIMED** this the 22<sup>nd</sup> day of May, 2023

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E. Kirk Rivers  
Mayor

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April D. Onley, NCCMC  
City Clerk

Robin Harris Dean of Health Sciences at COA accepted the proclamation from the Mayor and advised that there are multiple nursing programs available at COA and they are very appreciative that nurses are being recognized. It's been a hard last few years for nurses and they are thankful for the positivity and new life being breathed into them after a very tough time. COA graduates RNs every year and one nurse sees 40 patients a week on average. Each nurse takes care of 1,060 people a year and many nurses work for at least 25 years. One nurse will have taken care of more than 49,000 patients in their encounters. She noted this does not take into account the LPNs, which they have had a program for, for over 60 years. The power of nurses is strong and they appreciate that they're being recognized this month and in our community. Aisha Spence, Karen and Beth were also present from Sentara Albemarle and they thanked the Council for their recognition.

**b. Public Works Week;**

**PROCLAMATION**  
**NATIONAL PUBLIC WORKS WEEK**  
**May 22-26, 2023**

## **“Connecting the World Through Public Works”**

**WHEREAS**, public works professionals focus on infrastructure, facilities and services that are of vital importance to sustainable and resilient communities and to the public health, high quality of life and well-being of the people of City of Elizabeth City; and,

**WHEREAS**, these infrastructure, facilities and services could not be provided without the dedicated efforts of public works professionals, who are engineers, managers, and employees at all levels of government and the private sector, who are responsible for rebuilding, improving, and protecting our nation’s transportation, water supply, water treatment and solid waste systems, public buildings, and other structures and facilities essential for our citizens; and,

**WHEREAS**, it is in the public interest for the citizens, civic leaders and children in City of Elizabeth City to gain knowledge of and to maintain an ongoing interest and understanding of the importance of public works and public works programs in their respective communities; and,

**WHEREAS**, the year 2023 marks the 63<sup>rd</sup> annual National Public Works Week sponsored by the American Public Works Association/Canadian Public Works Association be it now,

**BE IT NOW RESOLVED**, that I, Kirk Rivers, Mayor, do hereby designate the week May 22-26, 2023 as National Public Works Week; I urge all citizens to join with representatives of the American Public Works Association and government agencies in activities, events, and ceremonies designed to pay tribute to our public works professionals, engineers, managers, and employees and to recognize the substantial contributions they make to protecting our national health, safety, and quality of life.

**ADOPTED** this the 22<sup>nd</sup> day of May, 2023.

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E. Kirk Rivers  
Mayor

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April D. Onley, NCCMC  
City Clerk

Mayor Rivers said he appreciated the Public Works Department. He felt that sometimes people took for granted what our Public Works Department did, from the sewer and water crews to the trash collectors. Director Bell advised that he had a brief presentation about Public Works Week prepared for the Council. Each year, the number of municipalities participating in Public Works Week continues to grow. Public Works Week began in 1960 to help communities understand what and who Public Works was. The 2022 theme was Ready and Resilient and Public Works professionals are always ready for anything. Former Mayor Bettie Parker issued a proclamation in honor of this event. This year’s theme is Connecting the World through Public Works. Some Public Works Week initiatives include touch-a-truck, which takes place at local elementary schools, a cook-off, a volleyball tournament, and street cleanup where they invite everyone who has adopted a street to come out and join them for cleaning on the streets. They also have an employee appreciation event where they honor staff who have had many years of service, as well as some who have gone above and beyond in the field. He provided a brief update on some of the recently completed projects and some of the ongoing projects. He noted that the Providence Road Bridge project has finally been completed, which was a long-time initiative. Grace Drive is underway and the Council will receive an update from the Timmons Group tonight. Rivershore Road is at about 65% of design and they are currently vetting right-of-way easements. They’d had a community outreach meeting, which had a good turnout and provided a lot of historical value for Aecom to implement and take in. He noted that the water plant upgrades are completed and painting at the water plant will be happening now. Well upgrades and SCADA upgrades are all ongoing projects to increase capacity.

Mayor Rivers thanked Director Bell for the update. He advised that they’d gone to Sheep Harney and given a presentation on all the trucks and the principal was so impressed with the employees and their demeanor. If we just spark their interest to keep them in school to make

the right choices with things like this, it's a testament to the department and it shows that they really wanted to be there. They'd made the city very proud. Director Bell said he'd also like to thank the ladies who worked in Public Utilities who were behind the scenes keeping everything together. They worked hard to get the goodie bags together for the kids and he couldn't have done it without them.

### **3. Comments from the Public:**

Mayor Rivers inquired of the Clerk if there were any persons present who wished to speak. Upon the Clerk's reply that there were, the Mayor asked that they be called to the podium.

**Farren Sheba – 200 E Burgess Street, Elizabeth City, NC** – Advised that last year, they organized Elizabeth City Skate Days with the intention of having families come out and enjoy downtown Elizabeth City. This was an event that was done all last summer and it was unofficial. Participants met on West Main Street outside of Muddy Waters and would spend the afternoon skating and enjoying the scenery. This year they wanted to officially get the roads closed down, so they worked with Parks and Rec and were surprised when they actually received a cease and desist order from the ECPD. Upon review of the ordinance, they learned that they could not use bikes, skates or anything of the sort downtown. The streets have been resurfaced and are amazingly smooth, so the goal of the events was to provide a recreational activity to allow families to explore downtown. It would have boosted business for at least Muddy's. They were requesting of the Council an amendment be made to the ordinance or a retraction of the ordinance, which would allow the citizens to skate freely on our roads. At the very least, they would like that officially sanctioned skate days be allowed. The residents they represent, which are family, friends, young adults, they are meeting in daylight hours and are courteous to traffic.

**Anne E. Turbett – 316 Burke Street, Elizabeth City, NC** – Advised that she was present with Farren and had participated in the skate events last year and it was a good time. She would like the Council to consider making downtown a walkable city, and would like shifting the culture to a more walkable downtown. There are many benefits, including people becoming more active. Biking and skateboarding could be allowed and at the least starting out slowly with sanctioned events to get people used to having more pedestrians in the downtown area. Environmental benefits would be less pollution. People would become more comfortable being downtown on foot and tourism supports business and enhances the city's identity. She said that she'd moved from Denver, which was a walkable city. We don't need to go to that level, but she would like to see us move in the direction of that culture, understanding that when we get downtown, you should slow down for pedestrian activity and make it safe. This creates a safe environment and helps create respect for pedestrians. This does fall under the City Council's goals to improve safety of neighborhoods and increase city-wide developments. This is also an initiative that would not cost any money beyond "share the road" signage, which could probably come from fundraising. She stated that different modes of transportation should be allowed in the downtown area.

### **4. Approval of Minutes:**

#### **a. Consideration – Approve May 8, 2023 Budget Work Session Minutes;**

**Motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Kem Spence, seconded by Councilwoman Katherine Felton to approve the minutes with any necessary corrections. Those voting in favor of the motion were: Biggs, Peel, Gibbs, Whitehurst, Spence, Felton, Baxter and Walton. Against: None. Motion carried.**

#### **b. Consideration – Approve May 8, 2023 Regular Session Minutes;**

**Motion was made by Councilman Johnson Biggs, seconded by Councilman Joseph Peel to approve the minutes with any necessary corrections. Those voting in favor of the motion were: Biggs, Peel, Gibbs, Whitehurst, Spence, Felton, Baxter and Walton. Against: None. Motion carried.**

#### **c. Consideration – Approve May 15, 2023 Budget Work Session Minutes;**

**Motion was made by Councilman Javis Gibbs, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Kem Spence to approve the minute with any necessary corrections. Those voting in favor of the motion were: Biggs, Peel, Gibbs, Whitehurst, Spence, Felton, Baxter and Walton. Against: None. Motion carried.**

**5. Consent Agenda:**

Mayor Rivers read the Consent Agenda items into the record, as follows:

- a. Consideration – Approve Budget Amendment for PB Mares (*Moved to Regular Agenda During Agenda Adjustments*);**
- b. Consideration – Subrecipient Agreement – Transfer of Grant to ECDI;**

Mayor Rivers requested the Council's pleasure on the Consent Agenda.

**Motion was made by Councilman Johnson Biggs, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Kem Spence to approve the consent agenda. Those voting in favor of the motion were: Biggs, Peel, Gibbs, Spence, Whitehurst, Felton, Baxter and Walton. Against: None. Motion carried.**

**6. Regular Agenda:**

- a. Approve Budget Amendment for PB Mares (*Moved from Consent Agenda During Agenda Adjustments*);**

Councilman Biggs said he'd requested to pull the item for a few reasons. The first was that we were increasing two different line items and not debiting one item, which he could somewhat follow the memo's explanation; however, we're increasing building inspection fees and we're not debiting it to offset the services. The other issue is that 160D says that municipalities may not debit that account for other items – it has to remain in the budget for that reason. He suggested that language be researched or we see if we could pull it from a different line item. Director Steward said the revenue is from public buildings, the increase, which was a way to pay for PB Mares. They have to increase the revenue line item to equal expenditures, so there is a debit and credit. Councilman Biggs said he did not think it could be taken from that line item. Director Steward asked what the statute was he was referencing. Councilman Biggs said he believed it was in 160D. Director Steward said she would research it and redo it if necessary. Councilman Biggs expressed concern that we've also come up with a new budget amendment form and we're not using it. Director Steward said this particular one was a "last hour" one, so it's not going through all the departmental hoops. Mayor Rivers said with that concern, he felt this should be tabled.

**Motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Kem Spence to table the budget amendment for PB Mares until the next meeting to provide adequate time for Director Steward to look into the general statute. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Katherine Felton. Those voting in favor of the motion were: Biggs, Peel, Gibbs, Whitehurst, Spence, Felton, Baxter and Walton. Against: None. Motion carried.**

- b. Presentation – Timmons Group;**

Director Bell advised that the Timmons Group would be providing an update on the Grace Drive Pump Station Upgrade. Project Manager Ashley Kabat started with the Grace Drive Pump Station expansion. Grace Drive is one of Elizabeth City's larger stations. It is reaching its current capacity and is utilizing only one of its pumps. Many of the valves are not functioning. Due to the aging infrastructure and its failings, it needs upgrades. The new upgrades will utilize three pumps called suction-lift pumps. The room housing the current pumps will be turned into a wet well. They will also be replacing the electrical components, the controls, and will improve the general building. The first step in expansion was meeting with the stakeholders who contribute flow to the pump station, including ECSU, the Airport and the Coast Guard. They met with all the entities and discussed their current and foreseeable projects to determine flow. The Coast Guard did not have many projects planned. The Airport did have several large

projects coming up, as did ECSU. The 2,600 gallons per minute does include capacity for all of these projects. Elizabeth City did receive funding from ARPA for this project in the amount of \$3.6 million, which came with a specific schedule we had to adhere to, such as a stakeholder meeting, laser scanning of the building, 30% and 60% progress set drawings provided to the team, and they are on track to execute the construction contract on November 1<sup>st</sup>. She shared a few photos of the pump station in its existing condition. They will use its existing cylindrical structure. There is a permanent diesel pump outside of the building used for redundancy. She noted that they walked through the entire facility with City staff to ensure that it was an easy to maintain and operate pump station. A second floor will be added to house the new pumps. Of the three pumps, two will be pumping at any given time. New stairs will also be added. The upgrade design was also done in 3D modeling design.

The second project is the Wastewater Treatment Plan Engineering Alternatives Analysis. The plant in Elizabeth City is reaching its 80% capacity, which is when we must start to plan. They are working on the analysis for DEQ, which analyzes all the alternatives. DEQ finds discharged water to surface water to be the least environmentally sound, so we must determine if there are other methods available before DEQ will allow us to do that. The analysis will go to the state and then we will be granted the extra capacity to discharge into the river if it's determined that's our best option. The limits will dictate what kind of wastewater treatment plant the City will need to build, and the limits have been requested from DEQ. They will present a draft of the analysis in the coming weeks. She encouraged the Council to contact her at any time if they had any questions. Director Bell said he'd requested this presentation because he wanted the Council to know what was going on before it hit 100% completion.

**c. Consideration – Additional Budget Meeting Dates;**

Mayor Rivers told the Council they were set to call for a public hearing June 12<sup>th</sup> and hold it on June 26<sup>th</sup>. He asked them if they'd like to hold any additional budget meeting dates at this time.

**Motion was made by Councilman Joseph Peel, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Kem Spence to adopt the proposed budget work session for May 30, 2023 at 5:00 p.m. Those voting in favor of the motion were: Biggs, Peel, Gibbs, Whitehurst, Spence, Felton, Baxter and Walton. Against: None. Motion carried.**

**d. Consideration – Re-Appointment to ABC Board (By Motion and ROLL CALL Vote);**

**Motion was made by Councilman Johnson Biggs, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Kem Spence to re-appoint Mr. William Allen to the ABC Board. Those voting in favor of the motion were: Biggs, Peel, Gibbs, Whitehurst, Spence, Felton, Baxter and Walton. Against: None. A roll call vote followed, which yielded the same results. Motion carried.**

**e. Consideration / Discussion – Boys and Girls Club;**

Councilman Biggs said he'd been contacted, as he believed the mayor and some of the other councilors had as well, about the Boys and Girls Club. A few years ago, we gifted the Boys and Girls club \$50,000. The County gave them \$150,000. He believed it was told to them in writing that we were going to provide them a monetary gift of \$50,000 for three years. He noted that it did not show up in last year's budget with the interim manager and it wasn't in this year's either. He asked that the Council give consideration to ask the manager to find the money to forward a payment to them.

Mayor Rivers asked Manager Freeman for his comments. Manager Freeman said the Clerk had gone back through the minutes and did identify where the former Council voted to award the \$50,000, but could not find a vote to continue it after the first year. Mayor Rivers asked if Councilman Brooks made the motion? Manager Freeman said that was correct. There were many conversations about continuing it, but we didn't have anything set in stone from what he could discern. We also talked about when we did United Way giving program, you could allocate giving to the Boys and Girls Club, but we don't see an actual vote to continue it. Councilwoman Whitehurst asked if he knew how much was given from the United Way program. Manager Freeman said he was not certain, as that money came from employees.

Mayor Pro Tem Spence asked if they had any documentation that said we'd promised them this money?

Councilman Biggs said he'd been forwarded an email from the 2021 where the manager had agreed to the \$50,000 for three years. Mayor Pro Tem Spence noted that if they have something like that, we should probably go ahead and do it.

Mayor Rivers said we can go ahead and do it at our budget meeting, as we're in non-departmental right now. We don't necessarily need a budget amendment for it because we can just put it in the budget. We committed this fiscal year and next. It's not in there this year, and it's not in the one we're looking at. He said he felt confident he could identify where some of it's coming from but it's been appropriated and hasn't been spent. But some of the line items he's looked at, he thought he could find it. Mayor Rivers continued that we came on and we said we'd hold off until July and we'd have a true picture in July, but if we do it now we write the check pre-July 1. Before we just say we do it, should we put it in 2023-202? Mayor Rivers pointed out that he was for it, but he wanted to make sure we did it correctly and in a way that was the best for everyone. He noted that the County sold the building and received the money off the sale. The County turned around and gave the Boys and Girls Club \$150,000 and SOULS \$10,000 due to some contingencies with that sale. The Council didn't own the building, so for us to match, we weren't obligated. But we are committed to \$50,000, which is fine because they're a great organization. If they're not in a predicament where they need it next month, we'll come back and vote on it in June, but if they're not in a crisis we can write it into this coming budget. But to do it in this budget that we're in, we're talking about 45 days. He continued that he did talk to one of the committee members, and told them that he had no problem saying we'll do the motion to move it forward, but we can do it the right way, set the budget up for July 1<sup>st</sup>. He just didn't want everyone to think we were following the County because we promised a match or something like that. The County gave it because of things happening with the sale of the building. The Boys and Girls Club was in that building. But the Council does want to fund the Boys and Girls Club.

Councilman Biggs asked if he can find the money in this year's budget, why can't he go ahead and move some of it now? We're going to have to do amendments anyway. Councilman Gibbs opined that you want to put the money where your mouth is. He offered that if Councilman Biggs can find money without looking, then if he really looks... if we said we'll give it, then we need to. Our word is our word. If it's agreed that we'll give it, we need to give it to them. He suggested we go ahead and find the money and give them the money.

Councilman Walton stated that he recalled when Councilman Brooks made this particular motion and they talked about several stages. He liked how the mayor looked at things. He liked the second idea the best because of the audit. He noted that a few minutes ago, we acted like we didn't know how to do an amendment and we had to table something, and now we're making the budget process more difficult than it is. He stated that he felt that this was not handled well because Councilman Biggs could have talked to Director Steward about the amendment before the meeting. Now we're saying we can do an amendment for something else like it's nothing, but a moment ago, we were acting like we didn't even know how to do an amendment. He suggested that we either need to talk out of one side of our mouth or keep it to ourselves. He said he was concerned that everybody's trying to rush the budget now. You either do one thing or the other. We can make the budget as easy as Mr. Freeman gives it to us or we can make it hard. Don't say, "Let's go check on amendments." People have been amending things all these years; it's not a hard thing to do. This wasn't called for. He pointed out that if he's the chairman of a particular committee, he's not going to bring a hardship on them purposefully. He'd get with the director in question and work it out before the meeting. He said that we have a good council and sometimes things get twisted and by the time it gets to the LGC, it's all out of whack. I can make a statement now and by the time it makes it around the dais, it will be out of control. Let's stop trying to make it difficult on Mr. Freeman. He urged the Council to find money that we need to find, help each other out and don't make it hard.

Councilwoman Baxter said when we have citizens and businesses sending us emails that are conversations that may have transpired, you have to look at those things as well. She noted that the emails that she got said that \$150,000 was promised, and each year was going to be \$50,000. She said she felt we just needed to find the money and get it over with.

Councilwoman Felton said she didn't think anybody around the dais would have a problem if they waited until July. She could understand why the email was written if that's what the previous Council wanted done. They could honor what was committed and if they could wait until July, they'd be good.

Mayor Pro Tem Spence asked if anyone had even talked to then about a 30 or 45-day delay? Councilman Biggs said he'd talked to a few of the members and he didn't think it was a problem. He just knew that finding \$50,000 next year would be hard enough. His point wasn't to rush it, so if we could find it, just appropriate it now. Even if it was just \$30,000, it would soften the overall blow. Anything we can do to soften the blow would help, that was his only concern. He was fine with waiting.

Mayor Rivers said he felt they were all committed, but he thought they should wait because everyone will be looking at their fund balance. At the end of the year when we get audited, they'll be looking at our fund balance. To allocate money to the Boys and Girls Club and take \$50,000, that doesn't go into our fund balance. He asked the Council to allow the fund balance to go up, allocate \$50,000 in the next budget and put the next \$50,000 after that. It would be a budgeted item for the next two years. To take it out now would affect our balance. We will have to cut and that gives us time to talk to nonprofits. We can keep going within our budget process. If something goes wrong and we can't do it, we can always, in November or something do a budget amendment to send \$50,000, but we only have 11% in our fund balance and that is extremely low. This year when we finish, we've passed a conservative budget and we're stabilizing. They're going to get it. They're not in a dire need and they just want to make sure this Council is going to give them something. Councilman Biggs said he appreciated the thought on growing the fund balance, but by skipping this year, we're kicking the can down the road. He understood the need to do that, but we may not be looking at the budget in two years. He didn't want them to put something off on a decision that a different governing body may be making.

Mayor Rivers said if we do change in the coming elections, the difference between what this Council did and the last Council, we will seal it with a vote. The problem is there wasn't a formal vote so it was not obligated officially.

**Motion was made by Councilman Johnson Biggs to allocate \$50,000 to the Boys and Girls Club in FY 2024, followed by \$50,000 in the FY 2025 budget to finish out the \$150,000 promised to them. Those voting in favor of the motion were: Biggs, Peel, Gibbs, Whitehurst, Spence, Felton, Baxter and Walton. Against: None. Motion carried.**

**f. Cleanup;**

Mayor Rivers said he wanted to get a report and begin to analyze how we go about getting our thoroughfares and neighborhoods cleaned. We have a few buildings that are falling into disrepair, including the old Riverwind facility. We have places in the city that are going down at a quick rate and he would like them identified and have letters written so we don't end up with squatters and then find ourselves in a position where we have to react instead of being more proactive. He added that this will also help us know what we need for an upcoming budget as far as required funding to tear down dilapidated buildings. He said that we need to address this issue so we have a plan to make sure the city remains beautiful. He pointed out that Town South Church took care of the median section downtown and Public Works or Parks and Rec cut the grass recently and it was a mess before. We need to find organizations to partner with us and support us or get departments to take care of these intersections because they're bad. We need to put a plan in place so when people come into town they're not turned off to our city. He praised the turnout for Amnesty Week a few weeks ago and said he'd put it on the Planning Commission or Community Development to have it discussed further maybe sometime in July or August. He encouraged anyone who had ideas before then to please provide them to the city manager.

**g. Announcement / Official Introduction of Police Chief;**

Manager Freeman thanked all the departments that helped out with the Potato Festival, as well as ECDI and Director Malenfant. He thanked the employees for participating in the cook-off. He thanked the Council for supporting these initiatives, which are very new and he appreciated



it. He formally introduced J. Phillip Webster as the new police chief of Elizabeth City. Chief Webster thanked the Council for allowing him to serve as the Chief of Police. He said that we have 36 loyal officers on the force and they deserve all the credit, he's just here to help steer a path. He thanked Director McClary for bringing him in as an interim. When he started he was kind of in-between jobs and was very grateful that Ms. McClary extended the offer for him to serve the city as an interim. He would continue to serve the city in the highest fashion. He noted that June 8<sup>th</sup>, 6:00 p.m. at the PD, they were having an open house for candidates. They had seven already that they would be sending the to the August class. He would also be speaking on Veterans Day at Hollywood Cemetery to recognize our vets on Memorial Day.

Mayor Rivers thanked Chief Webster and said he was glad to have him here in our community. Mayor Pro Tem Spence told Chief Webster that he appreciated the way he and Deputy Chief Avens worked together. He thought it was very important to have a strong team. He appreciated what they did and how they collaborated because the body takes on the characteristics of the head.

**7. Closed Session – As Allowed by NCGS 143-318.11(a)(3) Consultation with City Attorney and NCGS 143-318.11(a)(6) Personnel;**

**Motion to enter closed session as allowed by NCGS 143-318-11(a)(3) and NCGS 143-318-11(a)(6) was made by Councilman Joseph Peel, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Spence at 8:42 p.m. Those voting in favor of the motion were: Biggs, Peel, Gibbs, Whitehurst, Spence, Felton, Baxter and Walton. Against: None. Motion carried.**

The Council returned to open session at 9:20 p.m.

**8. Adjournment:**

Having no further business to be discussed, Mayor Rivers adjourned the meeting at 9:21 p.m.

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E. Kirk Rivers  
Mayor

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April Onley, NCCMC  
City Clerk

